

**Resource Recycling Advisory Commission  
Meeting of February 24, 2020  
Middletown Senior Center, 7 PM**

**Members Present:**, Bessie Bianco, Alison Johnson, Izzy Guy, Rebecca MacLachlan, Debbie Stanley, Krishna Winston.

**Members not present:**, Monica Belyea, Chantel DeArmitt, Robin Hanson , Harold Panciera.

**Member of the Public Present:** Zoamme Wanshafsky

**Public Works Staff Present:** Kim O'Rourke, Recycling Coordinator, Chris Holden  
Deputy Public Works Director

**Other City Staff:** Kori Winsneski, Deputy General Counsel

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Ms. Winston asked everyone to introduce themselves and then asked Attorney Wisneski to proceed with her presentation.

Attorney Wisneski discussed the history of the Lisbon facility, the relationship the City has to the facility and the creation of ECRRA. The City has a contract to deliver the Sanitation District trash to Lisbon. It first goes to a private transfer station on Industrial Park Road, then to Lisbon. There is a cost to the City for the transfer and the tip fee. The initial contract ends in Dec. 2020. The tip fee that the City pays is tied to energy cost and bonding. The City is currently paying a very low tip fee, (\$30.31/ton + \$25/ton for transportation). It does change each month but has been low since May 2019. The budget goes from April – April. Attorney Wisneski expects the tip free to increase slightly next year, and starting in 2021 a new ten year contract will begin and the tip free will be \$68/ton + transportation. The City formed a negotiating committee to review all the options and decided the best option was to extend the contract with Wheelabrator for the next ten years. The City owns the facility; Wheelabrator will operate it. They also negotiated a contract with SCRRA which will bring 140,000 tons of trash to the facility. Attorney Wisneski said the Lisbon facility is the youngest facility in North America and it is her understanding it is in good condition. Considering the status of trash in the state and the difficulties the MIRA towns are having, Middletown is in an excellent position.

Attorney Wisneski also talked about the transfer station on Industrial Park Road, formerly owned by Dainty Rubbish and currently owned by Murphy Road Recycling. There are two properties on that location. One of the properties had a fire and is currently being rebuilt. The other was defunct. The company has received a temporary authorization to operate out of the second location and will start collecting trash there on Monday. The District has been going to Hartford since the fire.

Ms. Winston introduced Mr. Holden and asked if anyone had questions for him. Ms. MacLachlan said she liked his idea of setting up public drop offs for food waste at different parts of town. She thought that would be helpful. Mr. Holden said he will be sitting through the entire meeting in case anything else comes up.

### **Public Comments**

Zoemma Warshafsky introduced herself and said she was interested in finding a way to collect and recycle cigarette butts. She works on Main Street and is tired of seeing all the cigarette butts on Main St. She researched and found that TerraCycle has a recycling program for cigarette butts. You can purchase containers, then the butts are collected and sent in for recycling. The plastic and paper are recycled. The tobacco is composted.

Members felt it was a good idea to offer better collection of the butts. They felt containers should be more available. They weren't sure if it would be possible to actually recycle them, but they did think it was possible to offer better collection and disposal of the cigarette butts. They discussed different types of containers and Deputy Director Holden said he would look into finding funding to purchase some for Main Street.

Members also felt signage would be important. The City should provide signs for stores to post to let people know that we are providing containers to safely dispose of cigarette butts. Public Works should also alert the police officers to watch for people littering.

Ms. Guy felt she would love to see benches on Main Street at some point as well.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the January meeting were approved as presented.

### **Recycling Coordinator Report**

City Green Team – Ms. O'Rourke said the Mayor will be convening a group of city employees from each department to discuss ideas to make the internal workings of city government more sustainable. Ideas will include, but not be limited to, using recycled paper, copying on both sides of the paper, eliminating single use water bottle usage, and offering an annual recycling presentation to employees. Ms. Stanley suggested doing something to reduce the amount of usable items thrown in the trash. She said a lot of city departments just throw perfectly fine items out to make room. Ms. Bianco suggested organizing a Freecycle List Serve, similar to Wesleyan's Freecycle. Ms. Winston asked whether employees used computers or paper at meetings. Deputy Director Holden said managers are given ipads or laptops and some do use them.

### **Chair's Report**

Ms. Winston said she will invite the Mayor to the next meeting.

### **Swap Shack**

Ms. Winston said the Shack has been practically empty. It needs an infusion of more materials.

### **Schedule**

2/26/20	Ms. Guy
3/4/20	Ms. Bianco
3/7/20	Ms. Winston
3/11/20	Ms. Stanley
3/18/20	Ms. Guy
3/21/20	Need Volunteer

The next meeting will be March 23.

Ms. O'Rourke sent out pictures of the Put and Take in Glastonbury. It basically is just a large open area surrounded by a concrete border. It has no roof. The Glastonbury superintendent said he requires payment for items left there. For instance, if someone brought in a couch, they have to pay to leave it there, because there is a good chance it will end up in the bulk waste. He said his staff does clear out the area almost daily so it doesn't pile up.

Ms. MacLachlan described the Swap Shack in Brewster Mass. She said it is staffed by volunteers, mostly seniors. It is only open when it is staffed, but it is open a lot of hours. The volunteers accept items and reject items and maintain the appearance of the items.

Members discussed the idea of having the swap shack in a different building, opening it only certain hours and staffing it for those hours, and improving the appearance of the building. Members asked Deputy Director Holden to look at the building and make a plan to improve its condition.

Ms. MacLachlan raised the issue of the limited hours of the recycling center. She felt they really are not friendly to residents. Closing at 3pm during the week is not helpful and the Saturday hours ending at noon are too early. Ms. Johnson agreed, the Saturday hours are very confusing. They asked Deputy Director Holden to look into changing the hours to make it more available to regular people. In discussing this, members thought it might be helpful to figure out the usage at the Center. When are people coming in? Mr. Holden said he would look into getting those figures.

### **New Commission Members**

Ms. O'Rourke said she recommended Stephan Allison for the Commission and hopefully he will be approved at the next Common Council meeting. Ms. Winston said

she will write to the Mayor about removing Christine Sherwood from the Commission since she has not attended nor has been responsive to calls and emails from Ms. Winston and Ms. O'Rourke. Members should think of possible replacements. Ms. Guy felt it would be helpful to increase the diversity of the committee.

Ms. MacLachlan made and Ms. Stanley seconded a motion to adjourn at 8:40 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kim O'Rourke*

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Recycling Coordinator